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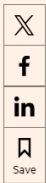
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# Lynton Crosby's CT Group accused of supplying forged records in court disputes

Former Tory election adviser's firm says confident information it supplied was 'genuine and accurate'

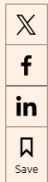


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Known primarily for its lobbying and election campaign work, CT Group has more recently sought to highlight its private intelligence services © FT montage/Getty

Cynthia O'Murchu in London FEBRUARY 24 2024



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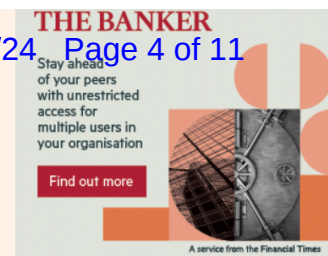
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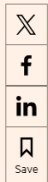
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Sir Lynton Crosby's CT Group has been accused of supplying forged banking records to claimants in two unrelated legal battles, raising questions about the consultancy's methods as it tries to promote its corporate intelligence practice.

The latest accusation against the former Tory election adviser's firm was made this week by relatives of a deceased Russian billionaire as they resisted an application from his widow and daughter for a \$900mn freezing order.

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The latest accusation against the former Tory election adviser's firm was made this week by relatives of a deceased Russian billionaire as they resisted an application from his widow and daughter for a \$900mn freezing order.

Similar claims were made in an unrelated legal dispute involving the estate of an Israeli-Belgian diamond trader, whose widow attempted to compel CT Group to identify the source for purported banking records used in court.

The High Court in London in December said the evidence in that case that the banking records were forged was “very strong” but that did not demonstrate “wrongdoing or improper behaviour by CT Group”.

CT Group, where Crosby is now executive chair after 22 years as chief executive, was working on both cases for top City law firm Mishcon de Reya to investigate the finances of their clients' opponents in each legal battle.

Founded by Crosby, a [highly connected political strategist](#) who was knighted for his role in David Cameron's Conservative 2015 election victory, CT Group is primarily known for lobbying and its election campaign work. More recently it has sought to highlight its private intelligence services.





Sir Lynton Crosby © Carl Court/Getty Images

CT Group told the Financial Times it was confident that the information it supplied in both cases was “genuine and accurate”.

The firm said it was “committed to and complies with all laws and regulations in all jurisdictions in which it works” and was “confident it has done so” in both cases.

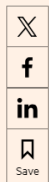
“CT Group holds itself to the highest standards and that is why we take these allegations extremely seriously,” the company added.

Mishcon said it had “conducted itself in accordance with its legal and regulatory obligations”.

The law firm added that it had “always required that any material gathered by CT on their behalf is done so lawfully”.

The High Court has not ruled on the authenticity of the disputed records in either case.

The Court said it had heard evidence from both sides that the records were



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The first case involved a bitter family feud about a more than \$3bn estate linked to the late Oleg Bourlakov, who died in 2021 and had made his money from cement and oil companies.

Mishcon represents his widow, Loudmila Bourlakova, and her daughter. The law firm hired CT Group to investigate the financial affairs of Oleg Bourlakov’s sister, her husband Nikolai Kazakov and another relative.

In January, Loudmila and her daughter sought a freezing order over \$900mn of assets she claimed were at risk of being dissipated by Kazakov’s side. Documents gathered by CT Group to support the application included records of purported banking transactions.

Kazakov’s side claimed in court the banking records were forged and the “vast majority of transfers” did not happen, adding that the records referenced accounts he never had or had closed before the purported transactions took place. Lawyers for the Kazakov parties declined to comment.

CT Group said the claims had been made “to distract from the merits” of the litigation.

A CT Group report referenced by Kazakov’s lawyers said the records were gathered from a “specialised database that aggregates banking data for statistical purposes [and] law enforcement purposes for the European Central Bank.”

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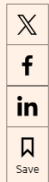
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A CT Group report referenced by Kazakov's lawyers said the records were gathered from a "specialised database that aggregates banking data for statistical purposes [and] law enforcement purposes for the European Central Bank."

The transaction records were provided to a subcontractor of CT Group by a third-party source, according to the report. It added that CT Group had a "general description" of the third party but not their identity.

The ECB told the FT it did "not have access to private banking transaction records" and would not comment on the legal proceedings.

Ahead of a hearing on Wednesday, Mishcon told the High Court its clients could not themselves vouch for the material provided by CT Group and that instead it would rely on other evidence for the application.

The court ultimately agreed to adjourn the application for a freezing order, after the Kazakov parties undertook not to dissipate the contested assets.

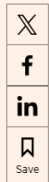
The second case involved the fortune of Israeli-Belgian diamond trader Ehud Laniado who died in 2019.

In that dispute, Mishcon, acting on behalf of Laniado's children, hired CT Group to probe the finances of their stepmother, Laniado's widow Linda Green. Green's lawyer did not respond to requests for comment.

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Green and the banks in question, including BNP Paribas, Barclays, and Julius Baer, denied the documents were authentic and that the transactions had been carried out, court records show.

She then filed an application in the High Court to obtain from CT Group the identity of the “individuals who are responsible for having produced forged documents” so she could alert law enforcement.

According to a December judgment that dismissed the application, the documents were purportedly provided to CT Group by a source referred to as “Person A”.

Person A was described as “a former intelligence operative within the intelligence service of an eastern European country who is currently resident in the Russian Federation”.

The person in turn obtained the contested banking transactions records from a third party, according to the judgment, including some purportedly from systems at the European Central Bank, which the ECB disputed.

CT Group has filed an application in New York court for records from electronic clearing and settlement platforms to try to and prove the alleged transactions in the Green case. Loudmila Bourlakova has made a similar application in relation to her litigation.

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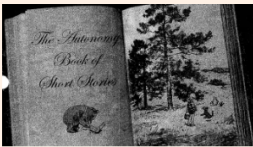
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